

# "S'Matter, Pop?"

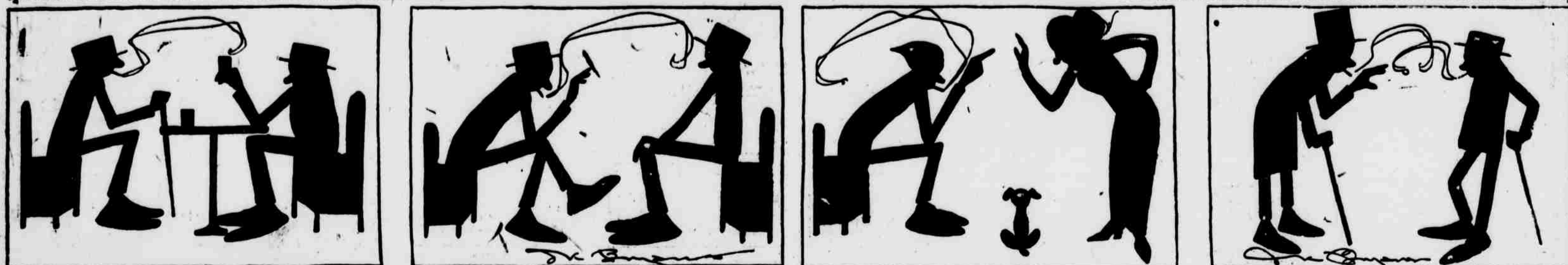
By C. M. Payne



# Overheard in Silhouetteville

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By J. K. Bryans



"What do you say to your wife when you come home late at night?"  
 "Shucks! I don't get a chance to say anything!"  
 "Your wife never got the best of you but once? When was that?"  
 "When she married me!"  
 "When you men start to talk you never stop to think."  
 "And when you women start to talk you never think to stop."  
 "Young man, the trouble is you are living too fast."  
 "Don't you believe it. I've got dyspepsia and I'm fasting to live."

# You'll Have to Agree With Axel—in the Last Picture!

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By Vic



# Stop Thief!

# The Great Laugh-Story of the Summer

Novelized From the Successful Play of the Same Title

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**SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.**  
 James Cloney is about to marry Madge Carr, a daughter of an almost-bankrupt old merchant. His only wedding present has been sent to the Carrs by the Carrs' only son, a clerk in a dry goods store. The Carrs are in a state of financial distress. The Carrs are in a state of financial distress. The Carrs are in a state of financial distress.

**CHAPTER XXV.**  
 (Continued.)  
**Who Hid the Chocolate Pot.**  
 "HERE was the chocolate pot?" inquired the practical Madge.  
 "Hidden in the pantry," "Who hid the chocolate pot?" asked Dr. Willoughby.  
 "Everybody looked at everybody else, and Cloney said, 'I didn't!' after which disclaimer everybody centred his gaze on Mr. Carr.  
 "Well, you needn't look at me," burst out the harassed old gentleman. "Come on!" snapped the sergeant. "Who hid the chocolate pot?" "I did," declared Mrs. Carr quietly. "What? Why did you hide it?" "I don't know."  
 But William Carr could not stand his wife taking the load of guilt on her shoulders, and he laid his hand affectionately upon her arm as he said: "No, no, mother! I won't let you take the blame. I think I hid it."  
 Here Cloney was overcome by the pangs of doubt and the desire to do justice to everybody, and he thrust himself forward, saying: "I won't allow this, sergeant. I can't. Now, mark you, I don't remember hav-

ing done so, but I expect I hid the chocolate pot!"  
 The sergeant shook off Cloney impatiently.  
 "What's all this about?" he snorted. "Come on, now. I want the truth. Who hid the chocolate pot?"  
 To his intense amazement he got three confessions at once. William Carr, Mrs. Carr and James Cloney all answered solemnly, as one person: "I did!"  
 For a brief instant he looked at them with knitted brows, while his mouth worked convulsively. Then he marched across the room and back again, trying to comprehend, but gave it up as he faced the three self-confessed sinners.  
 "It took three of you to hide that chocolate pot? Oh! This is a madhouse!"  
 "William, my brain is reeling," confessed Mrs. Carr to her husband.  
 "The sergeant is right," murmured Cloney. "This is a madhouse, and I am one of its worst inmates."  
 "This is all too much for me," observed Mr. Spelman to himself. "I'll keep out of it if I can."  
 "See here, sergeant," said Dr. Willoughby. "You want Mr. Jamison's steel stocks? Isn't that what you came for?"  
 "Well, what of it?" was the gruff rejoinder.  
 "Only this. The steel stocks are in that safe, and if you'll allow Mr. Carr to get them out you may have them."  
 "But Mr. Carr says they are not in the safe."  
 "But they are," insisted the doctor, going over to the safe and pulling the door open. "I know it. I'll show you. See, here they are!" He took the stocks out of the safe and handed them to the sergeant. "There you are. This is the cause of all the trouble. Take them."  
 The sergeant took the papers and scanned them hastily, finally gasping: "International Steel stock? Well, well!"  
 "How did they get in there?" exclaimed Mrs. Carr.  
 "Yes, how did they get back in there?" added her husband, looking as if he hardly believed his own eyes.  
 "Sh! sh! sh!" came from Doogan, Cloney and Dr. Willoughby.  
 "Cut out that shushing, I tell you!" stormed the sergeant. "Now, what kind of a game is this, anyway?"  
 "I didn't mean!" protested Mr. Carr.  
 "Who stole my warrant? That's what I want to know," shouted the sergeant,

reverting to his original grievance.  
 "The old man's got something in his pocket," volunteered Cloney, coming forward.  
 "He has? Get it!"  
 Cloney, only too glad to be doing something besides guarding a door, advanced upon William Carr and dug his hands into each of his pockets with the ostentatious disregard of the victim's feelings that one generally sees in a policeman making a personal search, and at last, from one of Mr. Carr's coat pockets, drew forth the missing warrant!

**CHAPTER XXVI.**  
**What Was Under the Sofa.**  
 HE sergeant snatched the warrant from Cloney, glanced at it to make sure it really was the missing document, and then looked fiercely at William Carr.  
 "Oh, father!" exclaimed Madge. And "Oh, William!" came from Mrs. Carr.  
 "What?" demanded Cloney. "You might have convinced anybody but a seasoned police officer."  
 "Are you sure?" asked the sergeant in a tone which showed he didn't believe the denial.  
 "You can search me," offered the old man.  
 "That's just what I'm going to do. I'm going to search everything and everybody in this house."  
 "What?" demanded Cloney. "You can't!"  
 "Oh, yes, I can," smiled the sergeant, holding up his warrant. "I've got a warrant now."  
 Jack Doogan retired to a corner at the end of the bookcase and surreptitiously took a fat pocketbook from his clothes. From the pocketbook he drew forth the roll of yellow-back bank notes he had taken from Douglas Jamison—and kissed it affectionately. Then, with a fervent "Good-by, bankroll," he dropped it into an outside pocket of the minister's coat and moved away to another part of the room. Mr. Spelman continued to read his prayer book.  
 "O'Malley," called out the sergeant, "grab a taxi, beat Mr. Jamison to Headquarters and bring him back with you."  
 "Right, sir!"  
 The sergeant carefully closed all the doors, warned his men who were left to keep their eyes open, and made the cold announcement:  
 "I'm going to search this bunch. I've found Mr. Jamison's suitcase, and now I'm going to find his money."  
 There was a chorus of expostulations from the Carr family, in which Dr. Willoughby, James Cloney and Jack Doogan joined. But the sergeant disregarded them all, and continued sternly:  
 "I want you all to line up here on this side. Come on! No, no! What are you all running around in a circle for, like a crazy mule in a circus? This isn't a ring-around-a-rosy game. I want you to line up here, and I want you to line up here, and I want you to line up here. Backing away from his prisoners to get a better view of them as a whole, the sergeant tripped over the sofa and fell upon it at full length in a most undignified heap. He was up in an instant, red in the face and as mad as a disturbed bumble bee, and he shouted to Cloney, pointing to the sofa:  
 "Move that thing out of the way!"  
 Cloney obeyed hurriedly, and, pushing the sofa back, brought into view the suitcase that Jack Doogan had hidden there when he heard the police coming in some time before.  
 "What's that?" demanded the sergeant, taking the suitcase out of Cloney's hand.  
 "Why, that's my suitcase," said Cloney in surprise. "What's it doing here?"  
 "That's what I want to know, grunted the sergeant, as he turned to William Carr and eyed him suspiciously. "Who put that suitcase under the sofa?"  
 "I don't know," wailed William Carr.  
 "What do you ask me for?"  
 "Who had this suitcase? That's what I'm asking. And by the great horn spoon, I'm going to find out," thundered the sergeant, glaring around him.  
 "I don't understand this," observed Dr. Willoughby. "But that suitcase—"

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